



# WASHINGTON STATE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

## KNOW YOUR RIGHTS IN PUBLIC ACCOMMODATIONS

The Washington State Human Rights Commission (Commission) enforces the Law Against Discrimination, Chapter 49.60 RCW.

### WHAT IS CHAPTER 49.60 RCW?

Chapter 49.60 RCW is a state law that protects all Washington residents from certain unfair and discriminatory practices in any place of public resort, accommodation, assemblage, or amusement. Examples include but are not limited to restaurants, hotels, stores, hospitals, government offices, theaters, schools, and public libraries.

### WHO IS PROTECTED FROM DISCRIMINATION?

The law prohibits unfair practices in places of public accommodation because of a person's:

- ♦ Race
- ♦ Creed
- ♦ Color
- ♦ National Origin
- ♦ Sex
- ♦ The presence of a disability, or
- ♦ The use of a trained dog guide or service animal by a person with a disability.

The law also prohibits retaliation for opposing an unfair practice.

### WHAT ARE PROHIBITED UNFAIR PRACTICES?

Under the law, if it's because of your race, creed, color, national origin, sex, disability, or the use of a trained dog guide or service animal by a person with a disability, a place of public accommodation may not:

- ♦ Engage in any act that directly or indirectly results in any distinction, restriction, or discrimination.
- ♦ Require any person to pay a larger sum than the uniform rates charged to other persons.
- ♦ Refuse or withhold from any person admission, patronage, custom, presence, frequenting, dwelling, staying, or lodging, except for conditions and limitations established by law and applicable to all persons.

The Law Against Discrimination does not require structural changes, modifications, or additions to make any place accessible to a person with a disability except as otherwise required by law. Behavior or actions constituting a risk to property or other persons can be grounds for refusal and shall not constitute an unfair practice.

## HOW QUICKLY MUST I FILE A COMPLAINT?

Under Chapter 49.60 RCW, a person must file a signed, notarized complaint with the Commission within (6) months from the date of the alleged discriminatory action(s) or event(s).

## HOW DO I FILE A COMPLAINT?

If you believe that you have been discriminated against, contact the nearest Commission office. An Intake Officer will review your situation and assist you in determining whether there is a basis for filing a complaint. Please inform the Commission if you need an accommodation due to a disability or limited English proficiency. The Commission's printed materials are available in alternate formats.

## WHAT HAPPENS AFTER I FILE A COMPLAINT?

- ◆ The Commission is a neutral fact-finder - we do not take either side during an investigation. An Investigator will be assigned to gather evidence to determine if there is reasonable cause to believe that a violation of law has occurred. As needed, the investigator may interview witnesses or review documents and records.
- ◆ If the Commission finds that illegal discrimination has occurred, the Commission will first attempt to negotiate or conciliate a voluntary agreement to resolve the issues of the complaint. If conciliation efforts fail, then the complaint will be considered for a formal public hearing before an Administrative Law Judge.

**VISIT OUR WEB SITE AT: <http://www.wa.gov/hrc>**

**We appreciate the opportunity to be of assistance to you and will make every effort to provide prompt service.**

<b>OLYMPIA HEADQUARTERS OFFICE</b> 711 S. Capitol Way, Suite 402 Post Office Box 42490 Olympia, WA 98504-2490 PHONE: (360) 753-6770 VOICE TTY/TOLL FREE: 1-800-300-7525 FAX: (360) 586-2282 TOLL FREE: 1-800-233-3247 Se Habla Español	<b>SEATTLE DISTRICT OFFICE</b> Melbourne Tower, Suite 921 1511 Third Avenue Seattle, WA 98101-1626 PHONE: (206) 464-6500  TTY: (206) 587-5168 FAX: (206) 464-7463
<b>SPOKANE DISTRICT OFFICE</b> Great Western Building, Suite 412 W 905 Riverside Avenue Spokane, WA 99201-1099 PHONE: (509) 456-4473 FAX: (509) 456-4441	<b>YAKIMA DISTRICT OFFICE</b> Liberty Building, Suite 422 32 North Third Street Yakima, WA 98901-2730 PHONE: (509) 575-2772 FAX: (509) 575-2064  Se Habla Español

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**THIS INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE IN ALTERNATE FORMATS**